



Creative Communities

Grant Program

Phase 2 Guidelines

Fiscal Year 2022

We are living and working amidst new levels of uncertainty these days; the COVID-19 pandemic has destabilized many elements of our personal and professional lives. Given this, the Arts Board is continuing the Creative Communities Grant Program to support arts projects throughout the state, including arts projects that directly address at least one of the three major crises we are currently facing: the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic fallout from that pandemic, and the way our state and country are engaging with issues of racial equity and social justice.

We recognize and deeply appreciate the critical role that artists and arts organizations are playing during this critical moment in time, and the role that they will continue to play in Wisconsin's reimagining and rebuilding process.

George Tzougros, Wisconsin Arts Board Executive Director
November 2020

This program is supported with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts



Wisconsin Arts Board - FY2022 Creative Communities Grant Program

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Wisconsin Arts Board – FY2022

Creative Communities Program Phase 2 Guidelines

Creative Communities Grant Program

Program Description:

The Creative Communities grants program encourages arts education and community arts development in Wisconsin. It provides support for projects that applicants do *with* the community rather than just *for* the community, and that further the Arts Board's goals in the following three areas:

- Arts Education
- Folk and Traditional Arts
- Local Arts

Within this frame, in FY22, the Arts Board also welcomes arts projects that directly address at least one of the three major crises we are currently facing: the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic fallout from that pandemic, and the way our state and country are engaging with issues of racial equity and social justice.

Applicants are welcome to submit one proposal to one of these three categories per year. For a full overview of the Creative Community Program guidelines for Phase 1 and Phase 2, see the [Creative Communities webpage](#).

Eligibility:

Applicants must have submitted a Phase 1 application and received a specific invitation from the Arts Board to submit a Phase 2 application.

Application Calendar:

February 5, 2021	Eligible applicants are invited to submit a Phase 2 application
February 18, 2021	12:15pm – Virtual Q&A session for Phase 2 applicants*
February 26, 2021	Deadline for applicants to submit draft applications for staff review (not required)
March 4, 2021 by 3pm	Deadline for Phase 2 online application and postmark or hand-delivery deadline for required hardcopy materials
April 9, 2021	Local Arts panel meets in Madison
April 19, 2021	Arts Education panel meets in Madison
April 23, 2021	Folk Arts panel meets in Madison
<i>*Virtual Q&A - Use this time to ask questions of WAB staff and hear other applicants' questions. To join the Q&A session, click here. While this is not required, it is encouraged.</i>	

May 7, 2021	Wisconsin Arts Board meets in Madison to make grant determinations
May 2021	Arts Board makes grant award announcements.
June 2021 (provided the Wisconsin State Legislature has passed the state budget)	Arts Board sends contracts and grant proposal revision report forms to grant recipients.
July 2021	Grant recipients submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signed contracts • grant proposal revision report forms, and • copies of the letters that they have sent to their legislators in which they notified them of the grant and invited them to a specific project activity/event.
July 2021	Once the state legislature has passed the state budget and the grantee has submitted the signed contract and other required materials, Arts Board mails grant check (via the Department of Administration). <i>(NOTE: The Arts Board cannot guarantee an exact timeframe for payment. It is possible that grant checks may not be sent until late Fall, depending on State Legislative and Administrative action.)</i>
July 1, 2021	Activities on which grant can be spent, begin (no earlier than)
June 30, 2022	Activities on which grant can be spent, end (no later than)
July 31, 2022	Final Report due
<p>Please note: Grant checks may not arrive until as late as December 2021, depending on State Legislative and Administrative action. If your project occurs before October, please contact staff to discuss the impact this may have on your project.</p>	

Grant Amounts:

Grants will range from a minimum of \$1,500 to a maximum of \$6,000 and must be matched 1:1 by the applicant. At least 50% of the match must be in cash.

The Granting Process

How to Apply:

A completed Creative Communities Phase 2 grant application must be submitted online using the Arts Board's Online Application System (<http://wab.smartsimple.com/>) **by 3 p.m. on March 4, 2021**. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Hard copy application materials must be postmarked (or hand delivered) to the Arts Board no later than that afternoon.

Hardcopy application materials are no longer required.

- Log-in to WAB's [online application system](#) and click 'In Progress.'
- Select your Creative Communities application.
- Complete the application form, clicking 'Save Draft' at the end of each page.
- When finished, click 'Submit.' *Reminder: Submission deadline is 3pm, March 4, 2021.*
- You will receive a confirmation email once your submission has been accepted.

Complete the Application Form:

First complete the **Application Information** tab and click the 'Save Draft' button at the bottom of the page.

At this point, you may begin completing the other 9 tabs:

Project Details

Summarizing information of the project, including the number of people engaged.

Narrative

The equivalent of 4 pages (2000 words) of detailed information about your project, in response to the narrative questions. If your narrative exceeds this limit, your application will be ineligible.

Budget

A detailed project budget, including sources of income, whether those matching funds are secured or pending, and expense items.

Board and Staff

Lists of current board and staff that include years of service and other information.

Access

Information about how you will make your project accessible to the public, including people with disabilities.

Evaluation

Information about how you will evaluate your project. You may share additional details within the narrative, and reference our [Sample Evaluation Tools](#) resource.

Work Sample

A piece of supporting documentation that demonstrates the artistic merit of the proposed project (past work by the artist(s) involved in the project, work created in an earlier year/phase of the project, etc.). All applicants must submit at least one work sample and no more than three. Work samples must be no more than three years old, should reflect the artistic quality of the activity and should not simply be a marketing piece for the artist or group. Please avoid voice-over promotional videos.

Instructions that will help to prepare the work sample are embedded in the application form.

NOTE: During the panel meeting, total review time for work samples is at the discretion of the panel and is often less than 3 minutes per applicant. Applicants should keep this in mind as they select their work samples, and consider that the panel bases the majority of its Artistic Value score on the work sample.

Support Material

The following material will be uploaded in this section:

- **Required Financial Documentation** - Upload a copy of the applicant organization's budgets from its most recently completed fiscal year, its current fiscal year, and a projected budget for its next fiscal year. For college/ university/school/tribal applicants: upload copies of the relevant arts program's budgets from its most recently completed fiscal year, its current fiscal year, and a projected budget for its next fiscal year – not the entire university/school/tribal budget.
- **Key Artistic and Administrative Personnel Biographies** - No more than 2 pages total
- **Letter of Commitment from Significant Partner Organizations, if applicable**
See [Glossary of Terms](#); up to 3 letters may be submitted in one document.
- **Sample Evaluation Tool** (one recent/current or future [sample evaluation tool](#) – survey, post-event notes, etc.)

Up to four of the following **optional support materials** may also be uploaded in this section:

- Examples of Educational Materials from the Recent Past
- Up to Three Letters of Support for this Project
- Most Recent Newsletter
- Press Clipping – No more than 2 years old
- Press Release – No more than 2 years old
- Other – Please consult with Arts Board staff prior to uploading

Evaluation Criteria

Arts projects (including those projects that directly address at least one of the three major crises we are currently facing: the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic fallout from that pandemic, and the way our state and country are engaging with issues of racial equity and social justice) will be evaluated based on the following criteria and on current public health guidance:

a) Artistic/Educational/Cultural Value

- For projects directly involving artists, the proposed activity has high artistic merit.
- For all others, the overall quality of the proposed project is high.
- Proposed activities are appropriate to the community that the applicant serves, and demonstrate artistic, cultural and/or educational value for that community.
- For projects in their second or third year, there is evidence that previous evaluation results have been used in planning this project.
- Activities meet the goals of the relevant Creative Communities component.
- For Arts Education Applicants: The project supports arts opportunities that foster imagination, creativity, and innovation in K-12 formal and informal education.
- For Folk Arts Applicants: The project enhances the appreciation of and ensures the continued vitality of the folk and traditional arts of Wisconsin.
- For Local Arts Applicants: The project supports the creation and development of the arts at the local level.

b) Organizational and Financial Management

- Appropriately skilled and experienced people including (when applicable) artists, staff, board and committee members are involved in the project with clearly defined roles.
- The activity is feasible as planned with a realistic timetable and attainable goals.
- The project is financially feasible.
- There are adequate earned and/or contributed matching funds from an appropriate variety of public and private sources, relative to the community.
- Project budget correlates to the applicant's narrative.
- Applicant demonstrates ability to develop and manage resources appropriately.
- If there is an organizational deficit, applicant has a plan to reduce it.

c) Community Participation & Accessibility

- The level of community involvement in the planning and implementation of this project is appropriate to the project.
- Applicant has forged appropriate partnerships for this project with an appropriate variety of public and private organizations.
- Activities address the educational, economic and/or social needs of the community.
- Activities indicate understanding and inclusion of the diverse community that the project serves.

d) Evaluation and Documentation

- The level of community involvement in the evaluation and documentation of this project is appropriate to the project.
- There is evidence of appropriate [evaluation methodology and tools](#).

Review Process

Peer Advisory Panels

The Arts Board uses a peer advisory panel review process for grant application review. Panels, comprised of individuals knowledgeable in the arts, review grant applications and make recommendations for approval of funding to the Board, which makes the final funding decisions. The Arts Board strives to select panelists who represent various geographic areas and diverse aesthetic and cultural perspectives. The panels, chaired by members of the Board who serve as non-voting facilitators, are comprised of arts administrators, artists, educators and other professionals and volunteers knowledgeable in the arts. Membership on panels rotates; applicants should not assume that panelists have prior knowledge of the applicant.

NOTE:

- The information provided in the application is the principal source of information for panel review. Therefore, applications should be clear, complete, and compelling in presenting all information.
- The responsibility for making a compelling case for state government support rests entirely with the applicant.
- Only the information required or suggested by the Arts Board will be presented to the panel. Applicants must adhere to the limits on support materials and work samples.
- Panelists may recommend little/no support if information is missing/incorrect/unclear.

Steps of the Review Process

1. Arts Board staff reviews Phase 2 applications to determine compliance with basic eligibility requirements.
2. The application materials are provided to the peer advisory panel, which is comprised of five panelists and chaired by a member of the Board who serves as a non-voting facilitator. Panelists' names will not be released to the public until the day of the panel meeting, as exempted from the open meeting law according to Wisconsin Statutes s.19.85(1)(e).
3. Panelists review all applications prior to the panel meeting. In addition, each panelist is assigned specific applications to study in-depth and present during the meeting. Panelists are instructed not to contact or discuss pending applications with applicants prior to the panel meeting.
4. Panel meets in Madison in April (specific panel meeting dates are noted on p. 3 of these guidelines and posted on the Arts Board's website). The meetings are open to the public. Applicants are encouraged to attend and observe. Applicants will not be permitted to present to or communicate with the panel in any way at the meeting.
5. At the panel meetings, panelists score applications based on evaluation criteria established by the Board (see Evaluation Criteria on p. 7 within these guidelines). The panel makes qualitative recommendations to the Board.
6. The recommendations of the peer advisory panel are reviewed by the fifteen members of the Arts Board, and accepted or denied at the Board's May quarterly board meeting, wherein grant awards are determined.
7. By mid-May, applicants will be notified of the Board's decisions. Contracts and other required material will be sent to grant recipients after the state has passed its biennial budget. (PLEASE NOTE: Arts Board cannot guarantee an exact timeframe for payment. It is possible that

grant checks may not be sent until late fall, depending on State Legislative and Administrative action. This means that summer and early fall projects might not receive their funding until after their project is completed.)

8. Applicants that did not receive a grant will have 30 days from receiving Board notification to appeal the decision. Appeals must follow the appeals process outlined within these guidelines.

Award Administration

The Arts Board uses a formula that incorporates the panel scores to determine funding for Creative Communities awards. While Arts Board staff is available throughout the application process to advise applicants, this advice does not represent or influence the decision of the panel or the Board, nor bind the Board in future determinations. Once the Board has determined the awards, the Arts Board will notify the applicants.

PLEASE NOTE: *The Arts Board cannot guarantee an exact timeframe for grant award payment. It is possible that grant checks may not be sent until late fall, depending on State Legislative and Administrative action.*

Grantee Reporting Requirements

If awarded a WAB Creative Communities grant, each grantee agrees to comply with the following requirements:

Acknowledgement of Arts Board Support

Grantees are required to give credit for grant-supported activities in all printed, online, and broadcast promotion, publicity, advertising, and printed programs by including the following credit line: "This project is supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts."

The Wisconsin Arts Board logo and credit line must be used in all printed and online materials. Please use the camera-ready copy of the [WAB logo](#), together with specific size and color requirements found on our website.

Articulating the Public Value of Creative Communities Grants

Grantees are required to write to their State Representative, State Senator and the Governor about the fact that they have received a Creative Communities grant from the Arts Board, how their project will serve their community, and to invite them to connect with the project in some specific way. These letters will help to inform their elected representatives of the importance of the arts - especially the arts involved in this proposed project - to Wisconsin's economy and quality of life.

Final Reports

Grantees are required to submit a Final Report at the end of the project, no later than July 31, 2022. The Final Report will be completed through SmartSimple. Grant recipients are required to include with the final report at least 3 appropriate high-quality digital images, digital video, or digital sound recordings documenting the funded activities that can be

celebrated in future Arts Board materials. Recipients must obtain documentation permission from those whose images are included.

NOTE: Applications from organizations that have not filed final reports for past grants will not be accepted for panel review.

Retention of Records

Grantees may be subject to an audit by the Arts Board or the National Endowment for the Arts. Organizations must retain financial records, including supporting documents, and all other information pertinent to an Arts Board grant for six years after the receipt of the award. This includes invoices, canceled checks, receipts, itemization of in-kind contributions, and general ledger records.

Accessibility Compliance and Documentation

All Wisconsinites should have access to the arts, both as audience members and artists. In order to comply with state and federal laws that prohibit the Wisconsin Arts Board, as a recipient of federal funds, from providing support to people or entities that discriminate against individuals with disabilities, each grantee is required to provide assurances that it will comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), in making its programs and activities accessible to individuals with disabilities.

By signing the Arts Board application and contract, grantees acknowledge that their programs, services, and facilities should be accessible to people with disabilities. Monies will not be granted and the Arts Board's endorsement or sponsorship will not be provided unless the applicants are able, upon request, to provide documentation of their efforts to be in compliance. Such documentation might include, but is not limited to, records of accessibility efforts completed to date, readily achievable facility access changes which have been accomplished, provision for maintaining accessibility features, training or education efforts designed to improve accessibility by individuals with disabilities, and efforts to involve such individuals in planning and achieving access to facilities and programs.

Appeals

The Arts Board recognizes that errors may occur in its application process and is committed to acknowledging any such errors and responding to rectify the effects of an error. The following appeals process enables applicants to identify these errors and omissions, and bring them to the attention of the Board, if the applicant can satisfactorily document that the application was misrepresented or improperly reviewed through no fault of the applicant.

Applicants may appeal the Board's funding decision only on the following grounds:

- a) The Arts Board has made a procedural error in handling the application; or
- b) A member of the staff, peer advisory review panel, or the Board violated the conflict of interest policy of the Board. Board decisions are subject to reversal or modification solely on these grounds.

The appeal must be made exclusively on the basis of materials submitted at the time of application. Changes in the applicant's situation after submittal cannot be considered. Evaluations of artistic quality or merit, including artistic excellence and leadership, the quality of the artistic activity, or the artistic work of an individual artist are not subject to appeal. The amount of the grant may not be appealed. No interpretation or judgment of relevant peer review panels may be appealed.

Any appeal must be submitted in writing to the Arts Board's Chairperson and postmarked no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the date of the written notification of the Board's decision. The appeal letter should identify the error or omission and the effect such error had on the recommendation of the advisory panel.

The Board Chairperson will review each appeal in consultation with the Executive Director to determine whether grounds for an appeal exist based on the above criteria. If such grounds are determined to exist, the appeal will be forwarded to the Executive Committee of the Board for consideration. The Executive Committee will solicit staff comment, review records and otherwise seek information pertaining to the case, and then will formulate a recommendation for action to the entire Board. If the appeal is supported by the Board, funds will be awarded only if they are available.

Glossary of Terms

Please note that a [Glossary of Terms](#) relating to all Wisconsin Arts Board grants is available on our website.